

Fire Safety In Residential Apartments

There are several areas of concern when it comes to fire safety in apartment buildings. Families in apartment buildings live close together which can cause potential risks to all associated with a fire.

While the chances of a fire starting in an individual apartment unit are about the same as in a private home, apartment unit fires have the potential to spread the fire, heat and smoke throughout the building – affecting the safety of all units and occupants.

FIRE SAFETY BEGINS WITH THE PROPERTY MANAGER

It is important that tenants know their exits as there must be two means of egress (exits) from your apartment building.

The primary or first exit is the tenant apartment door that leads into either an unenclosed (not separated by walls and doors) stairway or through a public hallway to an enclosed stairway that leads to the street.

The secondary exit should be one of the following:

- An additional enclosed stairway accessible from the public hallway. This is typically in newer buildings.
- An enclosed fire tower (stairway accessible from the public hallway)
- An outside fire-escape accessible from within your apartment through a window or door. Remember an elevator is **NEVER** an acceptable means of exit during a fire.
- Keep your exits clear and working. Properly maintained fire doors and exits will greatly reduce the chance of occupants being killed or injured in a fire in your building.
- Maintain apartment door or doors leading into a common hallway or vestibule as fireproof.
- Make sure the apartment door can be opened from the inside, without the use of a key.
- Keep stairways free of obstructions at all times. Do not allow the storing of anything such as bicycles, strollers or trash on or under stairways or stairway landings.

MAKE SURE TENANTS KNOW THEIR WAY OUT

Owners of residential apartment buildings should:

- Post the fire safety plan in the common hallways.
- Distribute a copy to each residential unit.
- Provide a copy to new tenants at lease signing.
- Re-distribute the fire safety plan annually during Fire Prevention Week, which occurs October 5th through October 11th.



SHOULD THEY STAY OR SHOULD THEY GO?

If your property is considered a non-fireproof building and a fire occurs, it is safer to have tenants leave the building immediately.

If your property is considered a fireproof building and there is a fire, it is usually safer to have the tenants:

- Stay inside rather than enter a smoke-filled hallway, especially if the fire is above their apartment.
- Have tenants keep their door closed.
- If capable, tenants should seal the door with duct tape or wet sheets and towels. Seal ventilators and any other openings where smoke may enter.
- Turn off air conditioners.
- Unless flames or smoke are coming from below, have tenants open their windows a few inches at the top or bottom. Don't break windows; they may need to be closed later.
- Call the Fire Department/911 with your building address and description of the conditions at your complex – and if possible a unit number of where the fire is located.

**Fire Prevention Week
October 5th through 11th
SMOKE DETECTORS
SAVE LIVES!**

For additional information on Huffmaster's services, please visit our website or call us!

Apartment Fire Safety Checklist

Prevention and planning is the key to protecting your tenants and their families. Use this checklist as a guide to identify possible fire safety problems in your building. If you check "NO" to any question, the potential hazard should be corrected to reduce the risk and increase your preparedness for fire.

	Yes	No
1. Does each unit have at least one operable smoke detector?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does each unit have at least one operable carbon monoxide alarm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are all electrical cords in good condition? (not frayed or cracked)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are all electrical cords in the open, not run under rugs or through doorways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Are apartment units free from storage of flammable products such as gasoline or propane?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Are tenants placing space heaters at least three feet from combustibles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Are space heaters plugged directly into wall sockets and not into extension cords?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Are your individual apartment doors fireproof? Self closing? (if applicable in your state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Are your buildings fire escape windows clear and unobstructed? (if applicable in your state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Can all windows in your building be opened?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Are building stairways free of storage and trash?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Are stairway fire doors kept closed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Are stairway fire doors fireproof?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Are exit lights in the stairway in good working order?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Do you have operable flashlights on hand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Do you have a fire escape plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Immediately correct problems or hazards
that are within your control or responsibility.**